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Online Services

Carol Tenopir

University of Tennessee - Knoxville

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VII

ONLINE SERVICES

- "Online Searching and Computer Programming: Some Behavioral Similarities" by CHARLES T. MEADOW.
 "Electronic Databases" by MARTHA E. WILLIAMS.
 "Information Search Tactics" by MARCIA J. BATES.
"Financing Online Search Services in Publicly Supported Libraries"
 by MARY JO LYNCH.
 "Large Databases, Small Computers and Fast Modems...An Attorney Looks at the Legal Ramifications of Downloading"
 by THOMAS S. WARRICK.

Related reading

- "Where Do we Go from Here?" by PAULINE ATHERTON COCHRANE.
 "Is There a Future for the End User in Online Bibliographic Searching?" by SYLVIA G. FAIBISOFF and JITKA HURYCH.
 "Experiences in Training End-User Searchers" by JUDITH S. HAINES.
 "BRS/After Dark: The Birth of Online Self-Service"
 by RICHARD V. JANKE.
 "Online After Six: End User-Searching Comes of Age"
 by RICHARD V. JANKE.
 "On-Line Systems: History, Technology, and Economics"
 by CHARLES P. BOURNE.
 "On-Line Information Retrieval Bibliography, 1964-1979"
 by DONALD T. HAWKINS.
 "Online Reference Service: How to Begin--A Selected Bibliography"
 by EMELIE J. SHRODER.
 "Full-Text Databases" by CAROL TENOPIR
 "Nonbibliographic On-Line Data Base Services"
 by JUDITH WANGER and RUTH N. LANDAU.
 "Search Techniques" by MARCIA J. BATES.
 "The Process of Searching Online Bibliographic Databases: A Review of Research" by CAROL HANSEN FENICHEL.
 "Online Bibliographic Search Strategy Development"
 by DONALD T. HAWKINS and ROBERT WAGERS.
 "The Reference Interview in the Computer-Based Setting"
 by SARAH KNAPP.
 "Pricing of Online Services for Nonprimary Clientele"
 by RICHARD J. BEELER and ANTOINETTE L. LUECK
 "A Cost Accounting Model for Online Computerized Literature Searching" by BERT R. BOYCE.
 "Fee-for-Information: Legal, Social, and Economic Implications"
 by LESLEY BUHMAN.
 "Financial Management of Online Services: A How to Guide"
 by HELEN DRINAN.
 "To Charge or Not to Charge: A Rationale" by JOHN LINFORD.
 "Using a Microcomputer to Communicate: Part 1: The Basics"
 by CAROL HANSEN FENICHEL.

- "Problems and Challenges of Downloading for Database Producers"
by ARNOLD A. JANSEN.
- "Copyright Protection for Bibliographic, Numeric, Factual, and
Textual Databases" by JEROME K. MILLER.
- "Downloading Overview" by LARRY N. OSBORNE.
- "Online Searching with a Microcomputer: Downloading Issues"
by CAROL TENOPIR.

MEADOW, CHARLES T. "Online Searching and Computer Programming:
Some Behavioral Similarities (Or Why End Users Will Eventually
Take Over the Terminal)." Online 3 (January 1979): 49-52.

This early article on a now recognized issue challenges intermediaries to cast aside their assumption that only professional searchers can do online searching. The author makes a convincing argument for an increase in end-user searching in the near future. From his early background in mathematics and computer programming, Meadow draws an analogy between programming and online searching. Just as programming languages develop to become easier to use and to allow various levels of programming expertise, so will online command languages develop. There will be a role for the end-user searcher as well as for the "highly skilled professional" who will handle the "top of the line" searches. The reference interview process will become more important. It will require the intermediary to assess the online knowledge of the requestor in addition to analyzing the topic to be searched. More online searching will be conducted at all levels with the online intermediary operating on a higher professional level.

Written before the creation of the new online systems and software that are targeted to an end-user market, this article anticipated many of the developments of online searching in the 1980s. It is valid today not only as an historical piece, but because it intuitively describes the search process and end-user motivation for searching.

Meadow, professor of information science at Drexel University when he wrote the article, is now at the University of Toronto, Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

Related reading

Cochrane, Pauline Atherton. "Where Do We Go From Here?" Online 5 (July 1981): 30-42. Design considerations for the future.

Faibisoff, Sylvia G. and Jitka Hurych. "Is There a Future for the End User in Online Bibliographic Searching?" Special Libraries 72 (October 1981): 347-55. The authors argue that many end users will want to search and librarians should educate them.

Haines, Judith S. "Experiences in Training End-User Searchers." Online 6 (November 1982): 14-23.

Janke, Richard V. "BRS/After Dark: The Birth of Online Self-Service." Online 7 (September 1983): 12-30. Winner of the 1983 Data Courier-Online Inc. Best Online Article award.

Janke, Richard V. "Online After Six: End User Searching Comes of Age." Online 8 (November 1984): 15-29. Follow-up on earlier article. Excellent bibliography.

WILLIAMS, MARTHA E. "Electronic Databases." Science 228 (26 April 1985): 445-56.

Although this article is aimed at a broad audience and assumes no prior knowledge of online searching, it is a valuable state-of-the-art summary for all. Williams is a pioneer and recognized leader in the field of online literature searching. In this article she defines databases in detail, differentiating between word-oriented, number-oriented, and picture-oriented. Word-oriented databases are further defined as bibliographic and full text. Specific examples are given throughout. Access to databases through online search service organizations is described with 1984 or 1985 data.

In addition to the descriptive information, Williams addresses several issues in online searching today. This is a good article to go to for definitions and short discussions of user-friendly front-end software, gateway systems, and artificial intelligence techniques in online searching. Other issues and trends discussed include: the conflict between low-priced public-sector databases and their commercial competitors, transborder data flow, copyright and downloading, optical disk technology for locally-held databases, and the changing role of publishers.

No other article to date tackles such an ambitious summary of past, present, and future issues in online searching. It also presents the viewpoints of intermediary searchers, end-user searchers, database publishers, and online service organizations.

Williams is professor of information science, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

Related reading

Bourne, Charles P. "On-Line Systems: History, Technology, and Economics." Journal of the American Society for Information Science 31 (May 1980): 156-60.

Hawkins, Donald T. "On-Line Information Retrieval Bibliography, 1964-1979." Marlton, NJ: Learned Information, Inc., 1980. Updated every year in the April issue of Online Review.

Shroder, Emelie J. "Online Reference Service: How to Begin--A Selected Bibliography." RQ 22 (Fall 1982): 70-75. Reprinted in James J. Maloney, ed., Online Searching Technique and Management. Chicago: American Library Association, 1983.

Tenopir, Carol. "Full-Text Databases." Annual Review of Information Science and Technology 19 (1984): 215-46. Overview of full-text databases and research on their use.

Wanger, Judith and Ruth N. Landau. "Nonbibliographic On-Line Data Base Services." Journal of the American Society for Information Science 31 (May 1980): 171-80.

BATES, MARCIA J. "Information Search Tactics." Journal of the American Society for Information Science 30 (July 1979): 205-14.

Winner of the 1979 award for best paper published in the Journal of the American Society for Information Science, this is a scholarly treatment of search tactics for professional searchers. Twenty-nine specific "tactics", defined as strategies or moves "that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of an online search," are drawn from the literature, the author's experience, and her observations of professional searchers.

Bates divides the 29 tactics into four broad categories: 1) monitoring tactics to keep the search efficient, 2) file structure tactics to make best use of the database and search system characteristics, 3) search formulation tactics to design and control the search process, and 4) term tactics to select and revise specific terms to be searched.

Specific tactics range from the mundane (for example, RESPELL to search under a different spelling or CORRECT to watch for and correct spelling and factual errors), to the complex (for example, SURVEY to review at each decision point the available options or STRETCH to use a source for a purpose other than that intended), to the humorous (for example, BIBBLE to look for a bibliography already prepared, "before launching oneself into the effort of preparing one.")

There is a tactic here for every situation and for every intermediary searcher. The article also is an attempt to begin to develop logical rules for the often intuitive process of search strategy and development. For those who may have trouble converting Bates' tactics to actual online situations, the more practical article by Hawkins listed below is recommended.

Bates was associate professor, University of Washington, School of Librarianship, Seattle, when the article was written and is now at the University of California at Los Angeles, Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

Related reading

Bates, Marcia J. "Search Techniques." Annual Review of Information Science and Technology 16 (1981): 139-69. A review of research on search strategy and techniques.

Fenichel, Carol Hansen. "The Process of Searching Online Bibliographic Databases: A Review of Research." Library Research 2 (Summer 1980): 107-27.

Hawkins, Donald T. and Robert Wagers. "Online Bibliographic Search Strategy Development." Online 6 (May 1982): 12-19.

Knapp, Sarah. "The Reference Interview in the Computer-Based Setting." RQ 17 (Summer 1978): 320-24.

LYNCH, MARY JO. Financing Online Search Services in Publicly Supported Libraries: The Report of an ALA Survey. Chicago: American Library Association, 1981. Summarized in: Lynch, Mary Jo. "Libraries Embrace Online Search Fees." American Libraries 14 (March 1982): 174.

This often-cited research report on how public libraries finance online search services provides valuable information for decision making. The bulk of the report describes a survey sent by ALA via the major online vendors to publicly supported libraries. Results were tabulated and interpreted by the Library Research Center at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

Libraries were asked to respond to a series of questions regarding fees for online services. The results showed that most libraries charge for online searching, but only on a cost-recovery basis. A majority of respondents believed that users, searchers, and administrators had positive feelings about the financing method, whether or not fees were charged.

The ALA has strongly advocated free access to all services in public libraries and an appendix in this report reproduces the "ALA Position Statement on Free Access to Information." Despite ALA's position, this research report shows that in reality most libraries charge some kind of fee for online searching. It is an issue that is likely to be debated for many more years to come.

The report includes an analysis of the literature on fees for online services and an extensive bibliography.

Lynch is director, Office for Research, American Library Association.

Related reading

Beeler, Richard J. and Antoinette L. Lueck. "Pricing of Online Services for Nonprimary Clientele." The Journal of Academic Librarianship 10 (May 1984): 69-72. Results of a survey of differential charges by type of patron in academic libraries.

Boyce, Bert R. "A Cost Accounting Model for Online Computerized Literature Searching." Journal of Library Administration 4 (Summer 1983): 43-49.

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Drinan, Helen. "Financial Management of Online Services: A How to Guide." Online 3 (October 1979): 14-21.

Linford, John. "To Charge or Not to Charge: A Rationale." Library Journal 102 (October 1977): 2009-10.

WARRICK, THOMAS S. "Large Databases, Small Computers and Fast Modems...An Attorney Looks at the Legal Ramifications of Downloading." Online 8 (July 1984): 58-70.

Copyright of electronic databases has become an issue of concern with the widespread use of microcomputers for online searching. In addition to acting as a telecommunications device, microcomputers allow the searcher to capture search results on the computer's magnetic storage device (downloading).

Warrick presents the legal view of database downloading in light of the 1976 Copyright Law. No court has yet ruled on the database copyright issue, but some copyright principles clearly apply. Original works in a database are copyrightable. Bibliographic databases fall under the copyright provisions for collective works or compilations. Downloading of information in databases is clearly legal only when the provisions of fair use apply or if a not-for-profit library does it in a non-systematic way under the special copyright section for libraries.

Ultimately, there are "no hard and fast rules as to whether downloading is prohibited in all circumstances." Until the courts rule on the legality of downloading, lawyers such as Warrick can only use their best judgment to guess what an individual judge might rule. Regulating downloading by contract between the database producer and database user, by higher database fees, or by special legislation are given by Warrick as possible future solutions to the uncertainty.

Warrick is an attorney with the firm of Pierson Semmes Crolins and Finley, Washington, DC.

Related reading

Fenichel, Carol Hansen. "Using a Microcomputer to Communicate: Part 1: The Basics." Microcomputers for Information Management 2 (April 1985). What you need to get started using a microcomputer for online searching.

Jansen, Arnold A. "Problems and Challenges of Downloading for Database Producers." The Electronic Library 2 (January 1984): 41-51. The producer's viewpoint.

Miller, Jerome K. "Copyright Protection for Bibliographic, Numeric, Factual, and Textual Databases." Library Trends 32 (Fall 1983): 199-209.

Osborne, Larry N. "Downloading Overview." Journal of Library Administration (1985). Legal and ethical issues.

Tenopir, Carol. "Online Searching With A Microcomputer: Downloading Issues." Microcomputers for Information Management 2 (April 1985): 77-89. Summarizes surveys on downloading, contract and copyright issues, and future effects of downloading.